

by another, it matters not from a nomenclature standpoint whether the *J. megacephalus* of 1834 be treated as distinct or as identical with some older species. To go a step further: a variety *paniculatus* of Engelm., 1868, must be erected into a species. The name *Juncus paniculatus* is already twice preoccupied by European plants, both now referred to other species. Who is to decide whether either of these is likely to prove valid? Are not different decisions likely to be rendered by equally reputable botanists, whose conceptions of these species may differ? The committee has answered these questions, as well as all the other questions which logically follow them, by saying, "We will reject not merely those homonyms which we know to be revertible and those which we suppose may perhaps be revertible, but we will reject all homonyms and thus make revertibility impossible." Considered from the standpoint of stability the wisdom of this decision is, it seems to me, incontrovertible. I am well aware, however, that the considerations I have just mentioned will have no weight with Dr. Robinson if he really believes, as I can hardly bring myself to think he does, that a stable nomenclature is impossible. If having reviewed the whole Botanical Club principles adversely and with critical care, he finds in them only one possible chance of instability, and if from a list of four thousand species he does not cite a single case in point, one surely cannot ask for a more favorable commentary on the stability-producing capacity of the system.—FREDERICK V. COVILLE, Washington, D. C.

Decapitalization.

Mr. Sheldon's open letter in the June number of the GAZETTE affords me another opportunity to speak against the tendency of many botanists to follow a bad example set by our friends the zoologists: that of decapitalization of specific names derived from proper names.

If Mr. Sheldon writes his specific name *bajaensis* then Prof. Greene is right in his claim that it is a trivial and meaningless combination of Spanish and Latin. *Bajaensis* on the contrary leads us to the knowledge that the species came from Baja, a town in Mexico. His co-reference to *nevadensis* as a good Latin specific name is another instance. *Nevadensis* claims the species to have been found in the state of Nevada, while *nevadensis* leads us to the belief that the species is of the whiteness of snow, and would be at the same time again a Latino-Spanish "jumble."—C. F. MILLSPAUGH, Field Columbian Museum, Chicago.